

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 428

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (ROBERT BOURASSA), PFOR, FR, CA

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF BOURASSA VISIT PARIS

1. SUMMARY: HOPES IN QUEBEC FOR LARGE IMPACT BOURASSA VISIT ON FRENCH APPARENTLY FADED BEFORE REALITY BUT VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN QUEBEC FRANCOPHONE MEDIA. EMPHASIS IN ANALYSES WAS ON CULTURAL EXCHANGE GAINS AND LACK OF REAL PROGRESS IN ECONOMIC FIELD. GENERAL DOUBT PREVAILED THAT PARIS TRIP DID BOURASSA AS MUCH GOOD DOMESTICALLY AS HE HAD HOPED. END SUMMARY.

2. BOURASSA VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE QUEBEC FRANCOPHONE PRESS AND TELEVISION. ARTICLES WRITTEN BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS SUPPLEMENTED BY AFP AND CANADIAN PRESS COVERAGE (SAMPLING TO FOLLOW BY POUCH). BEFORE THE VISIT BEGAN, THERE WAS MUCH ANTICIPATION OF EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE IN FRANCE DURING VISIT. IT WAS SPECULATED FRENCH WOULD AGREE ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING BILL 22 AND PARTICIPATE IN AN ENRICHED URANIUM PLANT PROJECT. ANTICIPATION FED BY SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTS SUCH AS LE MONDE'S AND INTERVIEWS SUCH AS LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS RAN WITH BOURASSA. THE SEPARATIST LE JOUR FEATURED BOURASSA'S STATEMENT IN LATTER INTERVIEW THAT THE ONLY CHALLENGE
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LEFT TO HIM WAS THAT OF INDEPENDENCE.

3. INITIAL ANTICIPATION FOR QUOTE BIG SPLASH UNQUOTE DECLINED WITH REALIZATION PARIS MORE INTERESTED BREZHNEV ARRIVAL AND GISCARD/FORD MEETING AS WELL AS TROUBLED DOMESTIC SITUATION. LE SOLEIL REMARKED ATMOSPHERE NOT RIGHT FOR LYRICISM NORMALLY ASSOCIATED SUCH VISITS.

4. REPORTING DURING THE MEETING GENERALLY STRESSED GET-TOGETHER WITH NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT AS GOAL AS WELL AS A NEUQSH FMR QUEBE/PAISIREWATIONS IN UWTURAW,0COMMERCIAL, AND COMMUNICATIONS FIELDS. GOFIREKEQEDIBOUKASSA WELL BUT FREVCH PRESS LOST INTEREST. STRONG EMPHASIS AT FINISH ON IMPORTANCE BOURASSA PARTICIPATION CABINET MEETING.

5. WRAP-UP ARTICLES: LE SOLEIL HEADLINING QUOTE BOURASSA RETURNS WITH CULTURAL ENTENTE UNQUOTE STATED FRANCO-QUEBECOIS COOPERATION WILL GROW IN CULTUKAL DOMAIN BUT JUST MARK TIME IN ECONOMIC AREAS DESPITE DESIRE BOTH GOVERNMENTS MOVE ACCENT TOWARD ECONOMIC COOPERATION. PAPER S CORRESPONDENT GILBERT ATHOT ANALYSED VISIT DECEMBER 7 AS A QUOTE MITIGATED SUCCES UNQUOTE., BECAUSE GENERAL CONTENT OF RESULTS WAS FAR FROM BEING AS SUBSTANTIAL AS CERTAIN IMAGE-MAKERS WOULD HAVE ONE BELIEVE. ECONOMICHCOOPERATION REMAINS UNCHANGED. POLITICAL RESULTS FOR QUEBEC AND BOURASSA HIMSELF LESS IMPORTANT THAN FORECAST. ONLY PROGRESS CAME IN CULTURAL FIELD WHERE ALL POSSIBLE AID IMPLEMENTATION BILL 22 OBTAINED. LE JOUR CORRESPONDENT JACQUES GRAY WROTE UNDER TITLE QUOTE AN OSTENTATIOUS VISIT BUT UNSPECTACULAR RESULTS UNQUOTE THAT FRANCO/QUEBECOIS RELATIONS CONTINUE BUT YIELD NOTHING SPECTACULAR.

6. COMPARISONS WITH TRUDEAU VISIT: LE JOUR WROTE THAT BOURASSA TREATED BETTER THAN TRUDEAU ... SHOWS WARMTH QUEBEC/PARIS RELATIONS AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO PARIS. OPINION BASED ON BOURASSA PARTICIPATION CABINET MEETING. LE SOLEIL RAN ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE TRUDEAU QAND BOURASSA IN PARIS: TWO TRIPS, TWO ATTITUDES. UNQUOTE. WHEREAS QUEBEC SELDOM MENTIONED IN OCTOBER, CANADA SELDOM MENTIONED IN DECEMBER. NEITHER GISCARD NOR CHIRAC COMMITTED PROTOCOL ERROR IN REFERRING TO QUEBEC AS QUOTE PAYS FRANCAIS UNQUOTE OF NORTH AMERICA AND TO BOURASSA AS REPRESENTATIVE OF QUOTE PEUPLE FRANCAIS DU QUEBEC, UNQUOTE LE SOLEIL CONCLUDED.

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UM EDITORIALS: MICHELHROY IN LE DEVOIR DECEMBER 9: ONE EXPECTED NOTHING SPECTACULAR BUT EXPENSIVE PREPARATIONS, PUBLICITY, TONE OF BOURASSA S REMARKS, AND WARMTH OF WELCOME LED OPTIMISTIC OBSERVERS BELIEVE CONCLUSIONS AS GREAT AS EXPECTATIONS. NOT THE CASE. VISIT NOT UNUSEFUL AS QUEBEC PREMIER SHOULD STRESS CULTURAL TIES BUT, IN REALITY, FRENCH HAVE LITTLE NEED FOR QUEBEC. BUT QUEBEC HAS NEED OF FRANCE FOR HELP IN STILL POORLY DEFINED POLICY OF CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY. HELP FOR IMPLEMENTATION BILL 22 MOST IMPORTANT RESULT

OF VISIT. OTHER RESULTS MEAGER. EDITORIAL ENDED WITH PLEA FOR
DEFINITION IN CONCRETE TERMS OF CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY.

8. GILLES BOYER IN LE SOLEIL OF DECEMBER 10 STATED THAT BOURASSA
VISIT IN TRADITION OF QUEBEC PREMIERS VISITS IN THAT CULTURAL
ACCORDS ALWAYS MOST IMPORTANT, BUT HE ADDED THAT TONE OF BOTH
GOVERNMENTS CHANGED. THE NORMALIZATION OF OTTAWA/PARIS RELATIONS
BROUGHT A QUEBEC/PARIS RELATIONSHIP IN THE TRADITION OF RELATIONS
CANADIAN PROVINCE WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENT. ATTEMPT PUT
EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC RELATIONS FAILED AS INTERESTS NOT YET COMPLE-
MENTARY. FRENCH ECONOMIC INTERESTS REMAINED WITH ALL OF CANADA.
ONE OF PRINCIPAL ACCORDS WILL BE FRENCH HELP WITH TASK OF MAKING
FRENCH WORKING LANGUAGE IN QUEBEC. FRENCH DID ALL NECESSARY TO
RESPECT CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY. WITHIN QUEBEC/OTTAWA/PARIS TRIANGLE,
FRENCH WANT INCREASE ECONOMIC EXCHANGES WITH OTTAWA AND CULTURAL
EXCHANGES WITH QUEBEC.
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